

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Original) An ordering method comprising:

transmitting sales information from an agent server to a user terminal via a communications network;

displaying the transmitted sales information at said user terminal to allow a user to select an item, and transmitting a purchase order of the selected item from the user terminal to the agent server for requesting a purchase of said selected item on behalf of said user, said sales information containing items that are only available in sales shops which are not accessible via said communications network; and

at said agent server, transmitting an acknowledgment message to said user terminal in response to said purchase order.

2. (Currently amended) An ordering method comprising:

transmitting sales information from an agent server to a user terminal via a communications network, the sales information containing sales items that are only available in sales shops which are not accessible via the communications network;

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at said user terminal, displaying the transmitted sales information to allow a user to select an item and transmitting a request signal to said server for a service charge required for inspecting the selected item;

at said agent server, determining said service charge depending on contents of the request signal and a cost database, and transmitting the determined service charge to said user terminal;

at said user terminal, displaying the transmitted service charge to allow said user to make a decision as to whether an inspection of said selected item is to be performed and transmitting a request signal to said server for indicating that the selected item be inspected when said user makes said decision;

at said agent server, transmitting an inspection report of said item to said user terminal;

at said user terminal, displaying the transmitted inspection report to allow said user to make a decision as to whether said item is to be purchased and transmitting a purchase order to said agent server for requesting a purchase of said selected item on behalf of said user when the user makes the decision; and

at said agent server, transmitting an acknowledgment message to said user terminal in response to said purchase order.

3. (Original) The ordering method of claim 2, wherein said sales information contains items that are only available in sales shops which are not accessible via said communications network.

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4. (Original) The ordering method of claim 2, wherein said inspection report contains a bill for requesting the user to pay for said inspection of the selected item.

5. (Currently amended) An ordering method comprising:
transmitting sales information from an agent server to a user terminal via a communication network, said sales information containing items that are only available in sales shops which are not accessible via said communication network;

at said user terminal, displaying the transmitted sales information to allow a user to select an item and transmitting a request signal to said server for a service charge required for making a search for a desired item if the desired item is not found in the displayed information;

at said agent server, determining said service charge depending on contents of the request signal and a cost database, and transmitting the determined service charge to said user terminal;

at said user terminal, displaying the transmitted service charge to allow said user to make a decision as to whether said search is to be performed and transmitting a request signal to said server for indicating that the desired item be searched when said user makes said decision;

at said agent server, transmitting a search report of said item to said user terminal;

at said user terminal, displaying the transmitted search report to allow said user to make a decision as to whether said item is to be purchased and transmitting a purchase order to said agent server for requesting a purchase of said item on behalf of said user when the user makes said the decision; and

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at said agent server, transmitting an acknowledgment message to said user terminal in response to said purchase order.

6. (Original) The ordering method of claim 5, said sales information contains items that are only available in sales shops which are not accessible via said communications network.

7. (Original) The ordering method of claim 5, wherein said search report contains a bill for requesting the user to pay for said search of the selected item.

8. (Currently amended) An ordering method comprising the steps of:

a) transmitting sales information from an agent server to a user terminal via a communications network said sales information containing items that are only available in sales shops which are not accessible via said communication network;

b) at said user terminal, displaying the transmitted sales information to allow a user to select one of a plurality of decision branches;

c) transmitting to said agent server a purchase order if the user selects a first decision branch, a first request signal for requesting a first service charge required for inspecting a desired item contained in said displayed information if the user selects a second decision branch, and a second request signal for requesting a second service charge required for making a search of a desired item which is not contained in said displayed information if the user selects a third decision branch;

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d) at said agent server, determining said first service charge if said first request signal is received depending on contents of the first request signal and a cost database, determining said second service charge if said second request signal is received depending on contents of the second request signal and a cost database, and transmitting the determined first or second service charge to said user terminal;

e) at said user terminal, displaying the transmitted service charge to allow said user to make a decision as to whether an inspection or a search of the desired item is to be performed and transmitting a request signal to said server for indicating that the desired item be inspected or searched when said user makes said decision;

f) at said agent server, transmitting an inspection report of said item or a search report of said item to said user terminal, depending on contents of the request signal of step (e);

g) at said user terminal, displaying the transmitted inspection report or search report to allow said user to make a decision as to whether said item is to be purchased and transmitting a purchase order to said agent server for requesting a purchase of said item on behalf of said user if the user makes said the decision; and

h) at said agent server, transmitting an acknowledgment message to said user terminal if the purchase order of step (c) or step (g) is received.

9. (Original) The ordering method of claim 8, wherein said sales information contains items that are only available in sales shops which are not accessible via said communications network.

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10. (Original) The ordering method of claim 8, wherein said inspection report contains a bill for requesting the user to pay for said inspection of the selected item and said and said search report contains a bill for requesting the user to pay for said search of the selected item.

11. (Original) An ordering system comprising:
a communications network;
a plurality of user terminals connected to said network;
an agent server connected to said network for transmitting sales information to a user terminal of one of said plurality of user terminals;
the user terminal displaying the transmitted sales information to allow a user to select an item, and transmitting a purchase order of the selected item to the agent server for requesting a purchase of said selected item on behalf of said user, said sales information containing items that are only available in sales shops which are not accessible via said communications network; and
said agent server transmitting an acknowledgment message to said user terminal in response to said purchase order.

12. (Currently amended) An ordering system comprising:
a communications network;
a plurality of user terminals connected to said network;

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an agent server connected to said network for transmitting sales information to a user terminal of one of said plurality of user terminals said sales information containing items that are only available in sales shops which are not accessible via said communication network;

the user terminal displaying the transmitted sales information to allow a user to select an item and transmitting a request signal to said server for a service charge required for inspecting the selected item;

said agent server determining said service charge depending on contents of the request signal and a cost database, and transmitting the determined service charge to said user terminal;

said user terminal displaying the transmitted service charge to allow said user to make a decision as to whether an inspection of said selected item is to be performed and transmitting a request signal to said server for indicating that the selected item be inspected when said user makes said decision;

said agent server transmitting an inspection report of said item to said user terminal;

said user terminal displaying the transmitted inspection report to allow said user to make a decision as to whether said item is to be purchased and transmitting a purchase order to said agent server for requesting a purchase of said selected item on behalf of said user when the user makes said~~the~~ decision; and

said agent server transmitting an acknowledgment message to said user terminal in response to said purchase order.

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13. (Original) The ordering system of claim 12, wherein said sales information contains items that are only available in sales shops which are not accessible via said communications network.

14. (Original) The ordering system of claim 12, wherein said inspection report contains a bill for requesting the user to pay for said inspection of the selected item.

15. (Currently Amended) An ordering system comprising:
a communications network;
a plurality of user terminals connected to said network;
an agent server connected to said network for transmitting sales information to a user terminal of one of said plurality of user terminals, said sales information containing items that are only available in sales shops which are not accessible via said communication network;

the user terminal displaying the transmitted sales information to allow a user to select a desired item and transmitting a request signal to said server for a service charge required for making a search of the desired item if the desired item is not found in the displayed information;

said agent server determining said service charge depending on contents of the request signal and a cost database, and transmitting the determined service charge to said user terminal;

said user terminal displaying the transmitted service charge to allow said user to make a decision as to whether said search is to be performed and transmitting a request signal to said server for indicating that the desired item be searched when said user makes said decision;

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said agent server transmitting a search report of said item to said user terminal;

said user terminal displaying the transmitted search report to allow said user to make a decision as to whether said desired item is to be purchased and transmitting a purchase order to said agent server for requesting a purchase of said desired item on behalf of said user when the user makes said ~~the~~ decision, and

said agent server transmitting an acknowledgment message to said user terminal in response to said purchase order.

16. (Original) The ordering system of claim 15, wherein said sales information contains items that are only available in sales shops which are not accessible via said communications network.

17. (Original) The ordering system of claim 15, wherein said search report contains a bill for requesting the user to pay for said search of the selected item.

18. (Currently amended) An ordering system comprising:

a communications network;

a plurality of user terminals connected to said network;

an agent server connected to said network for transmitting sales information to a user terminal of one of said plurality of user terminals, said sales information containing items that are only available in sales shops which are not accessible via said communications networks;

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said user terminal displaying the transmitted sales information to allow a user to select one of a plurality of decision branches, transmitting to said agent server a first purchase order if the user selects a first decision branch, a first request signal for requesting a first service charge required for inspecting a desired item contained in said displayed information if the user selects a second decision branch, and a second request signal for requesting a second service charge required for making a search of a desired item which is not contained in said displayed information if the user selects a third decision branch,

said agent server determining said first service charge if said first request signal is received depending on contents of the first request signal and a cost database, determining said second service charge if said second request signal is received depending on contents of the second request signal and a cost database, and transmitting the determined first or second service charge to said user terminal;

said user terminal displaying the transmitted service charge to allow said user to make a decision as to whether an inspection or a search of the desired item is to be performed and transmitting a request signal to said server for indicating that the desired item be inspected or searched when said user makes said decision;

said agent server transmitting an inspection report of said item or a search report of said item to said user terminal, depending on contents of the request signal,

said user terminal displaying the transmitted inspection report or search report to allow said user to make a decision as to whether said item is to be purchased and transmitting a second

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purchase order to said agent server for requesting a purchase of said item on behalf of said user if

the user makes said~~the~~ decision, and

said agent server transmitting an acknowledgment message to said user terminal in
response to each of said first and second purchase orders.

19. (Original) The ordering system of claim 18, wherein said sales information
contains items that are only available in sales shops which are not accessible via said
communications network.

20. (Original) The ordering system of claim 18, wherein said inspection report
contains a bill for requesting the user to pay for said inspection of the selected item and said and
said search report contains a bill for requesting the user to pay for said search of the selected
item.